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fed upon their farms, or measure the supplies consumed in their families, or the roots and grains fed to their stock, we must be prepared to find the census returns of these items founded upon estimates more or less approaching the truth, according to the soundness of judgment or systematic habits of the person answering the inquiries. Manufactures conducted methodically, and limited to the consumption of a few kinds of material, and the yielding of few kinds of product, are liable to but few difficulties in obtaining their statistics, the principal of which arises from the fact that the inquiries are made at a season of the year when the accounts are not posted up. The period which they embrace, extending through parts of two years, renders comparison with statistics for the civil year inconvenient and liable to error. The greatest difficulty incident to the procuring of manufacturing statistics, arises from the mixed and complicated character of the business, which may in one place embrace many distinct pursuits that elsewhere are reported separately. A furnace for reducing iron from the ore, may, for example, be connected with an iron foundry, smith shops, machine shops for working wood and metals, and the manufacture of a great variety of articles, which, as they are conducted together, will defy the most patient attempts at analysis, in assigning to each its due proportion of labor and capital. For this difficulty there can scarcely be hoped a remedy, and the science of statistics must, in many cases, be content with a general statement of values, and a very comprehensive plan of classification.

Inquiries of a historical character have been in some census schedules, but generally without satisfactory result. However desirable it might be to ascertain the date of establishment on a general retrospect of operations, this information often requires an amount of investigation or a search after absent records, that must be left to the local historian, rather than be imposed upon the Census Marshal. Of a still more objectionable and wholly impracticable character, would be inquiries implying professional education or special qualifications, such

as those relating to geology or natural history, which, to be worth anything, must be obtained by skillful persons, carefully instructed and generally familiar with the subject. There is constantly a tendency to the introduction of special inquiries into the census, to supply information that may interest a small class, but would prove of little general utility.\* They may perhaps, of themselves, be important, but in general, should be ascertained by investigations made for the particular purpose, by those whom they especially concern.

Respectfully yours,

FRANKLIN B. HOUGH.

ALBANY, March 8, 1859.

#### RUSSIAN AMERICA.

	1854.	1855.
Revenue—Products from sale of furs	\$568,563	\$564,689
“ “ other articles	258,415	268,060
Total .....	\$826,978	\$832,749
Expenses of administration in Russia and the colonies .....	\$400,362	\$424,435
Assurances, cost of freights and duties paid .....	277,759	259,457
Total .....	\$678,121	\$683,892
Russian population, Jan. 1, 1856 .....	9,725	

#### SURINAM AND THE DUTCH WEST INDIES.

In 1854 the population of Surinam consisted of:—

Free .....	13,793	viz., Males, 6,990	Females, 6,803
Slave .....	38,545	“ 18,313	“ 20,232
Total .....	52,338	“ 25,303	“ 27,035

and contained 256 plantations, on which were residing 924 free, and 32,524 slave persons. Of these 91 were sugar, 52 coffee, 15 coffee and cocoa, and 32 cotton plantations.

The sugar exports were, in the year named: to the Netherlands, 22,055,108 lbs.; to North America, 4,654,276 lbs.; and to other places, 6,376,634 lbs.—total, 33,083,018 lbs., valued at 2,333,763 gulden. The molasses exported was:

\* In preparing the schedules for the New York State Census of 1855, the Secretary of State received suggestions in some instances strikingly illustrative of the above statement. One correspondent wished inquiries about the kind and quantity of timber; another, the number of sheep slain by dogs, and others, subjects quite as foreign as these to the legitimate objects of the census.